

## Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 1000

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, YO

SUBJECT: WHAT YUGOSLAV COMMUNISM SHOULD MEAN TO WESTERN  
EUROPEANS

1. IN LINE WITH THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT TO CHIEFS OF  
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MISSION IN LONDON THAT, WHILE A YUGOSLAVIA INDEPENDENT

OF THE SOVIET UNION IS IN OUR INTEREST, TITO'S COMMUNISM IS A DANGEROUS MODEL FOR WESTERN EUROPE, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO REMIND OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN SOCIALIST FRIENDS EXACTLY WHAT THE YUGOSLAV SYSTEM IS AND IS NOT. THERE EXISTS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ROMANTICISM AND WISHFUL THINKING THAT YUGOSLAVIA DEMONSTRATES THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMUNISM WITH A HUMANE AND DEMOCRATIC FACE.

2. FIRST, SOME FACTS. ACCORDING TO RECENTLY PUBLISHED OFFICIAL STATISTICS, THERE WERE 1,154 YUGOSLAVS CONVICTED FOR "POLITICAL" OFFENSES IN 1974 ALONE, THIS MAY RESULT IN A HIGHER PER CAPITA NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN YUGOSLAVIA THAN IN THE SOVIET UNION. ALTHOUGH WE DOUBT IMPRISONMENT HERE CARRIES THE CONSEQUENCES IT DOES IN THE SOVIET UNION, I.E., MENTAL INSTITUTION OR GULAG, IT IS NONETHELESS A VERY HIGH FIGURE INDEED. IN THE WEST THE ONLY CURRENT WELL-KNOWN CASE IS MIHAJLO MIHAJLOVIC, IN A TRAGIC BUT REVEALING IRONY FIRST JAILED APPARENTLY FOR WRITING ABOUT THE REPRESSION OF WRITERS IN THE SOVIET UNION. ALTHOUGH ATTENTION HAS RECENTLY FOCUSSED ON THE ARREST OF 30-40 FOR ATTEMPTING TO SET UP A RIVAL COMMUNIST PARTY, THERE IS RELATIVELY LITTLE PUBLICITY ABOUT THE LITERALLY THOUSAND WHO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED FOR CRITICAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE STATE OR PARTY OR FOR ADVOCATING MORE AUTONOMY FOR NATIONAL GROUPS.

3. TURNING FROM REPRESSIVE PRACTICES TO IDEOLOGY, THERE IS NO REAL RELAXATION IN YUGOSLAVIA OF THE CONCEPT OF DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. NOTHING IN THE YUGOSLAV EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT A COMMUNIST PARTY FREE OF MOSCOW'S YOKE WOULD BE ANY MORE WILLING TO SHARE POWER INTERNALLY OR OBSERVE DEMOCRATIC RULES OF THE GAME. HAVING PURSUED THE CLASSIC LENINIST ROAD TO POWER BY ELIMINATING ALL OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES AND FORCES IN THE PERIOD 1941-48, TITO LATER CHANGED DOMESTIC COURSE, AT LEAST IN PART TO DEMONSTRATE DIFFERENCES WITH THE SOVIET UNION SO AS TO MAINTAIN A BASE TO SUPPORT HIS INDEPENDENCE. IN THE SKILLFUL GAME OF MIRRORS WHICH HAS FOLLOWED, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER HE OR HIS FOLLOWERS HAVE EVER FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED THEIR VIEW ABOUT THE

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PARTY'S DICTATORIAL ROLE.

4. THERE IS MUCH TALK ABOUT THE UNIQUE YUGOSLAV PATH, ABOUT WORKERS SELF-MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY AND DECENTRALIZATION OF POLITICAL POWER. TITO AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE, IN FACT, ALLOWED PERIODS OF SERIOUS PURSUIT OF BOTH, BUT EACH TIME HE HAS ULTIMATELY COME UP AGAINST THE INHERENT CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PLURALISM

(TENDING TOWARD DEMOCRACY, IF YOU WILL) AND THE PARTY'S MONOPOLY OF POWER. DURING THE MOST RECENT EXPERIMENT FROM 1965 TO 1971, WORKERS AND ENTERPRISES WERE PERMITTED AN INCREASING FREEDOM OF ACTION AND THERE WAS A TENDENCY TOWARD DECENTRALIZATION WITHIN THE PARTY. BY 1971 THESE RELATIVE FREEDOMS COMINED WITH NATIONALIST TRENDS TO PRODUCE MAJOR CHALLENGES TO THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP (THE PRESS BEGAN TO CRITICIZE THE PARTY, REGIONAL CENTERS OF POWER EMERGED, THE ECONOMY WAS INCREASINGLY GOVERNED BY MARKET FORCES), AND TITO SHARPLY REVERSED COURSE. THE PAST FIVE YEARS HAVE WITNESSED A PURGE OF LIBERAL PARTY AND INTELLECTUAL LEADERS, AS WELL AS SO-CALLED NATIONALISTS. ALTHOUGH THE CONSTITUTION OF 1974 WAS CAST IN TERMS OF DECENTRALIZATION, IN FACT, WE PERCEIVE A COMPETING TREND TOWARDS RECENTRALIZATION AND DISCIPLINE IN POLITICS AND THE ECONOMY--PUTTING THE PARTY SQUARELY IN THE CENTER OF BOTH. SYMPTOMATIC OF THIS TREND IS A RECENTLY LAUNCHED CAMPAIGN AGAINST INTERNAL "ENEMIES", INCLUDING FORMATION OF A SELF-DEFENSE ORGANIZATION DESIGNED IN PART TO RECRUIT ORDINARY CITIZENS TO REPORT IDEOLOGICAL DISSIDENTS TO THE SECURITY FORCES.

5. YUGOSLAVIA REMAINS A MORE DECENTRALIZED AND OPEN SOCIETY THAN THE SOVIET UNION OR ITS EAST EUROPEAN SATELLITES (PARTIALLY BECAUSE ITS INABILITY TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT ENCOURAGES IT TO ALLOW OVER A MILLION WORKERS TO TRAVEL FREELY TO WESTERN EUROPE). IT IS OF INCREASING VALUE TO US IN ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE FROM MOSCOW AMONG EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES. AND DENYING ITS STRATEGIC TERRITORY TO THE SOVIETS IS OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO OUR SECURITY. BUT THERE ARE NO SIGNS THAT IT IS HEADING TOWARD PLURALISM AND GREATER FREEDOM. CONFIDENTIAL

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IT PROVIDES NO GROUND FOR HOPE THAT ANY COMMUNIST PARTY WILL EVER MAKE THE BASIC CONCEPTUAL CHANGE REQUIRED TO SHARE POWER ON A PERMANENT BASIS. IN FACT GENUINE ACCEPTANCE OF A MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM BY ANY WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTY WOULD BE CONSIDERED A SERIOUS IDEOLOGICAL THREAT TO THE YUGOSLAV WAY. THE PRESS HERE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO POINT OUT THAT COMMUNIST PARTY PARTICIPATION IN WESTERN EUROPE IS ONLY THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM, NOT ITS FINAL STAGE. AND IN COMMENTING ON THE FRENCH CP'S ABANDONMENT OF THE TERM "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT", THE YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS STRESSED THAT THIS DOES NOT CHANGE THE "THREE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: RULING ROLE OF THE WORKING CLASS, NECESSITY FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE IRREPLACEABLE POSITION OF THE VANGUARD PARTY".

6. LOOKING TOWARD THE POST-TITO ERA, ALTHOUGH I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT YUGOSLAVIA IS RELATIVELY STABLE, I DO NOT BELIEVE ITS STABILITY IS THE RESULT OF GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF "SELF-MANAGEMENT SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY". IT IS RATHER THE RESULT OF A ROUGH EQUILIBRIUM OF POTENTIAL DESTABILIZING FACTORS. YUGOSLAVS THEMSELVES WILL SAY THAT A DICTATORSHIP OF SORTS IS ESSENTIAL TO CONTROL THE CENTRIFUGAL FORCES OF NATIONALITY. THE KIND OF DICTATORSHIP WHICH THEY PRAGMATICALLY HAVE DEVELOPED IS EXPLICABLE MORE IN TERMS OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY THAN AS THE ELABORATION OF ANY COHERENT AND COMPLETE IDEOLOGY. THER ARE AND WILL REMAIN ENORMOUS PULLS IN BOTH THE DIRECTION OF PLURALISM AND GREATER CENTRALIZED POWER. YUGOSLAVS HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP AN IDEOLOGICAL PLATEAU BETWEEN THESE TWO POLES. THEY HAVE NO WAY OF ANSWERING THE QUESTION HOW MUCH FREEDOM IS SAFE AND APPROPRIATE OR HOW MUCH CENTRALIZED POWER IS REQUIRED. IT IS, THEREFORE, HARD FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND WHY ANY EUROPEAN SOCIALIST WOULD WISH TO EMULATE EUROPE'S "FIDDLER ON THE ROOF".  
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